

A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH!

With the home entertainment release of **STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS** imminent, **STACK** looks back at the fervor that erupted in the lead-up to its cinema premiere, and what we can expect on the Blu-ray.

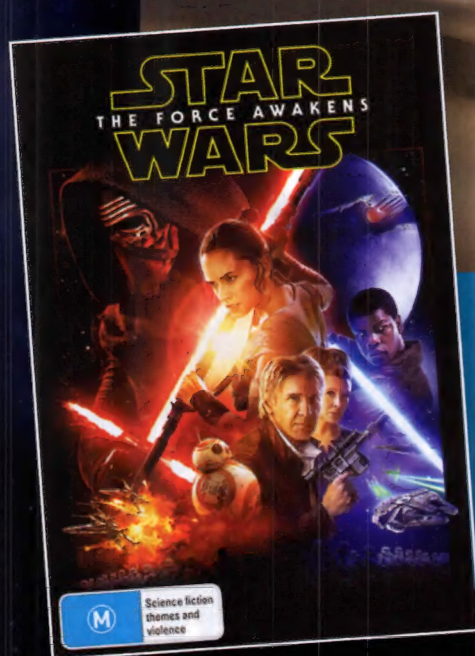
It's hard to believe we're about to watch *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* in the comfort of our own home theatres after what seemed like an interminable wait following the announcement in January 2013 that J. J. Abrams would be helming Episode VII.

During that time the film was breaking records before production had been completed, from multi-million views of teasers and trailers on YouTube to box office returns from ticket pre-sales.

Speculation was rampant regarding plot details, which is a credit to J.J. Abrams' ability to maintain a shroud of secrecy in an age when spoilers and leaked scripts can compromise our viewing pleasure.

The aforementioned trailers were paused, scrutinised, dissected, discussed and recut. A behind-the-scenes montage from San Diego Comic-Con 2015 provided a further glimpse of faces old and new. And fan reaction videos depicted ecstatic weeping at each new snippet of footage that was revealed.

When the movie finally opened here on Thursday, 17 December 2015, it was devoured by ravenous fans between midnight and dawn, leaving sidewalks outside cinemas eerily deserted for the early morning sessions – a time that traditionally saw impatient patrons lining the streets



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in the very definition of the term 'blockbuster'.

Oh how times have changed. A long time ago in our own galaxy, circa 1977, you had to queue around the block to see *Star Wars* and hope that tickets for that particular session didn't sell out before you reached the box office.

Even as late as 1999, when *The*

Phantom Menace was one of the most anticipated movies in history (!), diehard fans camped out for months in advance to be at the very first session of the first new *Star Wars* movie in 16 years.

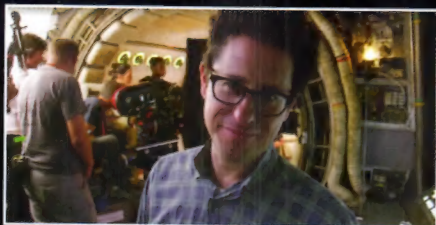
But there were no tent cities and folding chairs springing up on Hollywood Blvd in 2015, prior to the opening of the *The Force Awakens* – everyone had bought tickets online well in advance, in a record-breaking frenzy. Welcome to the future of *Star Wars*.

JB HI-FI
EXCLUSIVE

The hugely anticipated home entertainment release of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* on April 13 is also likely to break records for DVD and Blu-ray sales.

So what can we expect in terms of bonus material and deleted scenes? Disney have confirmed the 2-disc Blu-ray will contain the following features:

- **Secrets of The Force Awakens: A Cinematic Journey** – For the first time, discover the complete story behind the making of *The Force Awakens*, revealed through in-depth footage and exclusive interviews with the actors and filmmakers in this feature documentary.



- **The Story Awakens: The Table Read** – Cast members familiar and new reflect on the memorable day they all first came together to read the movie's script.
- **Building BB-8** – See how the filmmakers brought the newest droid to the screen, creating an instant fan favourite in the Star



Wars universe.

- **Crafting Creatures** – Watch movie magic as the filmmakers bring a cast of new creatures to life.
- **Blueprint of a Battle: The Snow Fight** – Go deeper into the epic, climactic lightsaber battle between Rey and Kylo Ren.
- **John Williams: The Seventh Symphony** – The legendary composer shares personal insights of his work on Star Wars and *The Force Awakens*.
- **ILM: The Visual Magic of The Force** – An insider's look into the remarkable digital artistry of the movie's visual effects.
- **Force For Change** – Heroes come in all shapes and sizes. See how the Star Wars: Force for Change initiative has united Star Wars fans all over the globe to help others.

As far as the **Deleted Scenes** are concerned, there are six, and they are reportedly quite brief in duration:

- **Finn and the Villager**
- **Jakku Message**

- **X-Wings Prepare for Lightspeed**
- **Kylo Searches the Falcon**
- **Snow Speeder Chase**
- **Finn Will Be Fine**

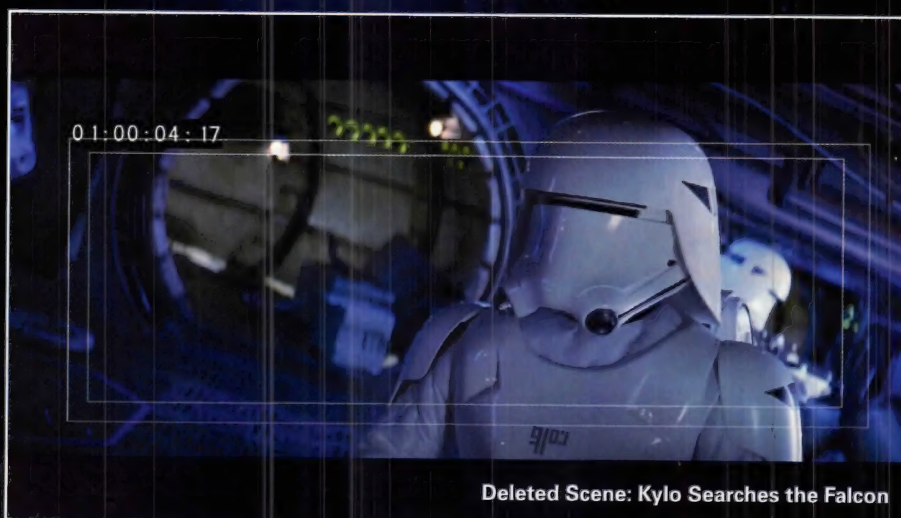
Unlike George Lucas, it's unlikely that Abrams will reinstate these scenes into the final cut of *The Force Awakens* for subsequent Special Editions, but you never know...

In addition to the DVD and Blu-ray releases, a **Limited Edition Steelbook Blu-ray** (see top) will be available exclusively from JB Hi-Fi while stocks last, so be quick.

Disney has also announced that a 3D Blu-ray version of *The Force Awakens* will follow later this year.

The first six Star Wars films are also still available in a Complete Saga Blu-ray box set.

There's never been a better time to be a Star Wars fan. May the Force be with you on April 13.



Deleted Scene: Kylo Searches the Falcon